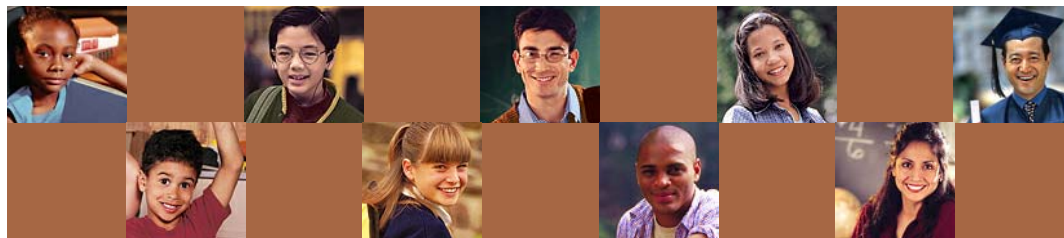


# the condition of education 2005



## INDICATOR 6

### Children With Selected Disabilities in Public Schools

The indicator and corresponding tables are taken directly from *The Condition of Education 2005*. Therefore, the page numbers may not be sequential.

Additional information about the survey data and supplementary notes can be found in the full report. For a copy of *The Condition of Education 2005*, visit the NCES website (<http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/pubsinfo.sap?pubid=2005094>) or contact ED PUBs at 1-877-4ED-PUBS.

**Suggested Citation:**

U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics. (2005). *The Condition of Education 2005*, NCES 2005-094, Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.



# Elementary/Secondary Education

## Children With Selected Disabilities in Public Schools

*In 2000, some 3.9 million children, or 8 percent of those enrolled in public elementary and secondary schools, were classified as having mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or a specific learning disability.*

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), originally enacted in 1975, mandates that children with disabilities in the United States be provided with a free and appropriate public school education. This indicator examines the number and characteristics of children classified as having mental retardation, emotional disturbance, or a specific learning disability and served under IDEA.<sup>1</sup> In 2000, some 3.9 million children in kindergarten through grade 12 in public elementary and secondary schools were classified as having one of these disabilities, accounting for 8 percent of the total public elementary and secondary population (see supplemental table 6-1). The majority of these students were classified as having a specific learning disability (2.8 million), followed by mental retardation (647,000) and an emotional disturbance (438,000).

Males were nearly twice as likely as females to be classified as having one of these disabilities (11 percent of males vs. 6 percent of females). Males represented 67 percent of all children classified as having one of these three categories of disability in 2000, and they made up

a larger percentage than females classified as having an emotional disturbance (78 percent), a specific learning disability (67 percent), or mental retardation (58 percent).

Students' likelihood of being classified as having these disabilities varied by their race/ethnicity. While Black children represented 17 percent of public school students in 2000 (*indicator 4*), they made up 22 percent of all children classified as having one of these three categories of disability. Black and American Indian children were both overrepresented in this disabled population: 11 percent of all Black children and 10 percent of all American Indian children enrolled in public schools were classified as having one of these three categories of disability. In comparison, 8 percent each of all White and all Hispanic children and 3 percent of all Asian/Pacific Islander children enrolled in public schools were so classified. Black public school students were also disproportionately represented in each of the three disability categories: they made up 33 percent of mentally retarded children, 27 percent of children with an emotional disturbance, and 18 percent of children with a specific learning disability.

<sup>1</sup> Specific learning disabilities made up 50 percent of all special education students served under IDEA, followed by speech or language impairments (19 percent), mental retardation (11 percent), and emotional disturbance (8 percent) (U.S. Department of Education 2002, table II-5, p. II-24). An additional nine categories encompass the remaining 12 percent of students. Speech or language impairments and other categories are not included in this analysis because the data were not collected in the Office for Civil Rights, 2000 Elementary and Secondary School Survey. See *supplemental note 7* for definitions of disability categories.

<sup>2</sup> American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Black and White categories exclude Hispanic origin. American Indian and Asian/Pacific Islander categories do not exclude Hispanic origin.

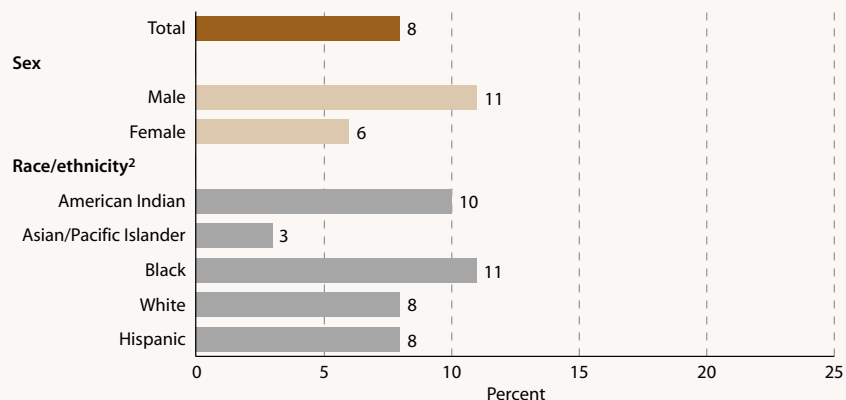
NOTE: Total is the sum of children classified with mental retardation, emotional disturbances, and specific learning disabilities. Public schools reported on the number of children in each of the three categories of disability receiving services under IDEA at that school, regardless of whether they are residents or nonresidents in the school district. Additional categories of disability were not collected by this survey and thus were not included in this analysis. See *supplemental note 7* for more information about student disabilities. Does not include prekindergarten or preschool children. For information on the Elementary and Secondary Survey, see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 2000 Elementary and Secondary School Survey. Retrieved November 16, 2004, from <http://205.207.175.84/ocr2000/>.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
Supplemental Notes 1, 3, 7  
Supplemental Table 6-1  
U.S. Department of Education 2002

**CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES: Percentage of children in public elementary and secondary schools who were classified as having mental retardation, emotional disturbance, and specific learning disability and who were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), by sex and race/ethnicity: 2000**



## Children With Selected Disabilities in Public Schools

**Table 6-1.** Number, percentage distribution, and percentage of children in kindergarten through grade 12 in public schools who were classified as having mental retardation, emotional disturbance, and specific learning disability, and who were served under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), by sex and race/ethnicity: 2000

Sex and race/ethnicity	Total <sup>1</sup>			Mental retardation <sup>2</sup>		
	Number	Percent distribution	Percent of all students <sup>3</sup>	Number	Percent distribution	Percent of all students <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,908,226</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>8.4</b>	<b>647,016</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>1.4</b>
Sex						
Male	2,621,321	67.1	11.0	376,944	58.3	1.6
Female	1,286,905	32.9	5.7	270,072	41.7	1.2
Race/ethnicity <sup>4</sup>						
American Indian	54,282	1.4	10.1	7,537	1.2	1.4
Asian/Pacific Islander	61,206	1.6	3.2	11,579	1.8	0.6
Black	853,669	21.8	10.9	216,131	33.4	2.7
White	2,356,123	60.3	8.3	343,098	53.0	1.2
Hispanic	582,946	14.9	7.8	68,671	10.6	0.9
Sex and race/ethnicity	Emotional disturbance <sup>5</sup>			Specific learning disability <sup>6</sup>		
	Number	Percent distribution	Percent of all students <sup>3</sup>	Number	Percent distribution	Percent of all students <sup>3</sup>
<b>Total</b>	<b>437,585</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>2,823,625</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>6.1</b>
Sex						
Male	341,233	78.0	1.4	1,903,144	67.4	8.0
Female	96,352	22.0	0.4	920,481	32.6	4.1
Race/ethnicity <sup>4</sup>						
American Indian	5,480	1.3	1.0	41,265	1.5	7.7
Asian/Pacific Islander	5,197	1.2	0.3	44,430	1.6	2.3
Black	119,894	27.4	1.5	517,644	18.3	6.6
White	268,009	61.2	0.9	1,745,016	61.8	6.1
Hispanic	39,006	8.9	0.5	475,269	16.8	6.4

<sup>1</sup> Total is the sum of children classified with mental retardation, emotional disturbances, and specific learning disabilities.

<sup>2</sup> Mental retardation refers to significantly subaverage intellectual functioning existing concurrently with deficits in adaptive behavior and manifested during the developmental period, which adversely affect a child's educational performance. Includes children classified with mild, moderate, and severe mental retardation.

<sup>3</sup> Percent of all students uses the total population from the subgroup row as the denominator. For example, 11.0 percent of all males are classified as disabled.

<sup>4</sup> American Indian includes Alaska Native, Black includes African American, Pacific Islander includes Native Hawaiian, and Hispanic includes Latino. Black and White categories exclude Hispanic origin.

<sup>5</sup> Emotional disturbance includes an unexplainable inability to learn, an inability to build or maintain interpersonal relationships, inappropriate behavior under normal circumstances, a general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression, and a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

<sup>6</sup> Specific learning disability refers to a disorder in one or more of the basic psychological processes involved in understanding or in using language, which may manifest itself in an imperfect ability to listen, think, speak, read, write, spell, or do mathematical calculations.

NOTE: Detail may not sum to totals because of rounding. Schools reported on the number of children in each category of disability receiving services under the Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA) at that school, regardless of whether they are residents or nonresidents in the school district. Additional categories of disability were not collected by this survey and thus were not included in this analysis. Does not include prekindergarten or preschool children. See *supplemental note 7* for definitions of disability categories. For information on the Elementary and Secondary School Survey, see *supplemental note 3*.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), 2000 Elementary and Secondary School Survey. Retrieved November 16, 2004, from <http://205.207.175.84/ocr2000r/>.